

## Closure by cowlicklesschick

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**Summary:** Jonathan and Nancy in the car headed home from Murray's.

## Closure

The ride back to Hawkins, initially, is...quiet.

Nancy supposes this is to be expected – they've finally done it, finally gotten justice for Barb, and she doesn't know how to feel about it.

They've also finally...well, *done it*, and she's not completely sure how to feel about that, either.

Jonathan's been quiet since they said their farewells to Murray, though she can feel him glancing at her every couple of minutes.

They've been driving for almost half an hour when he clears his throat.

"So...um, you okay?"

Surprised, she studies him. He looks the same, except maybe a little of the tension is gone from his shoulders, the same tension that she knows is gone from hers, too. But his hands are gripping the wheel a little too tightly for him to be completely relaxed.

"Yeah," she tells him, honest. "I'm good. You?"

His hands relax, and he makes the quiet huffing sound that she's learned is a laugh. "Yeah. I'm good. Could've done with a little more sleep, though." He smirks at her, but it's not smug, it's an expression of camaraderie, of mutual *can you believe we just did that*, which is exactly what she's been feeling since they were laying side by side, staring up at the ceiling in that grungy guest room, gasping for breath and sheets sticking to their skin.

And so she grins. "Hey, *you're* the one who came to *my* door."

He shrugs. "I'm also the one who didn't have to knock, because *you* were already headed to *my* room."

She doesn't have an argument for that, and he knows it so he continues, "I'm also the one who was woken up later for a round two."

That does it; she feels the pink sweep up her neck, painting her cheeks and heating the tips of her ears.

Jonathan chuckles, really chuckles this time, and she's too happy about how *right* it sounds coming from him to really be embarrassed.

"Your fault," she mutters, and looks out her window. It *is* his fault; Jonathan is many things, but kind, considerate, are perhaps the most noticeable. She wasn't surprised to find that he wasn't any different in bed.

"You want an apology?" Now he *does* look smug.

"Do you?" she fires back, fighting giggles.

Instantly his expression shifts, the smirk softening into a fond smile. "Definitely not."

That changes the giggly feeling into a much deeper one, one she's not ready to face just yet.

She returns the little smile, and faces out the windshield. After that it's quiet again, and eventually her thoughts turn from recent events to upcoming ones, and she can't stop the worry from gnawing at her stomach. What if the papers don't believe them? What if that tape they risked so much for isn't enough? What if –

"Hey." His hand rests gently on her knee. "Don't do that. If anybody can sell this, it's Murray. They'll expose the lab, you'll see."

She sighs, not surprised he can read her so easily. "I hope so. I just – it sucks, that this is all I can do. Her parents have hoped for so long, and I'm...I'm taking that away from them. They're going to be devastated, and it's because of me."

He's quiet for a moment, then suddenly they're pulling over. Nancy doesn't even have time to ask what he's doing before he reaches over and takes her hand.

"Last year, when Will first went missing..." He swallows. "My mom never gave up hoping he was alive, but I didn't believe her at first. And that...that was harder than anything. Harder than...than putting

up those posters, harder than seeing the look on Hopper's face when he came to tell us they'd found that body in the quarry...hard than even picking out my little brother's casket. I was so *sure* Will was gone, and my mom was driving herself crazy waiting for him to come home. I kept seeing us in ten years, her still setting three places at the table and keeping his room ready."

Nancy squeezes his hand. She didn't know Joyce well back then, but she remembers seeing the tiny woman in a decimated living room, keeping vigil under the Christmas lights. She remembers the fierce, desperate look in Joyce's eyes, waiting for her boy to come home.

"She couldn't move on because she couldn't believe he was dead. Barb's parents...it's the same. Only we know it's a false hope for them, so...so I think it would be cruel to let them keep on hoping and looking for her, when you know she's gone. Yes, they're gonna be hurt. But you're giving them closure, Nance."

He's right, of course, and she nods even as she wipes her eyes. His hand is on her knee again, and she looks at it. Broad, strong, callused from being his family's handyman in an old, crappy house, but gentle too, and tender. She doesn't really know what she likes best about his hands, actually. But she *does* know that she likes the feeling of his fingers gently rubbing the inside of her leg, just above the knee.

He suddenly seems to realize what she's staring at, what he's doing, and jerks his hand back like he's been scalded. "Sorry," he mumbles, and puts the car back into gear and pulls back onto the road.

They sit in embarrassed silence for a full ten seconds before she can't help herself. "I liked it."

Jonathan looks at her. "What?"

She rolls her eyes, and reaches over, takes his hand back off the steering wheel to put it on her leg again. "Don't be sorry." She keeps her fingers twined with his, and as he starts those little circles again on her thigh, she starts them on the back of his hand with her thumb. She can see the way his mouth turns up, how his shoulders settle into the back of his seat, and knows she looks the same.

He doesn't let go for the rest of the trip.